



# MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## Tree Debris Disposal Guidelines for Individuals

Technical Bulletin

2/2002

Environmental Assistance Office

Recently an ice storm in northwest Missouri, including the Kansas City area, caused many tree branches to break. Individuals and private entities are faced with a tremendous volume of wood waste that needs to be put to beneficial use or disposed of. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources has the following recommendations in preferential order. Property owners with tree branches or whole trees damaged by the storm can dispose of wastes in the following manner:

- **Cut wood into stove or fireplace lengths and stack.** Since the wood is not seasoned, it is not desirable to burn it this year. Hold for the winter of 2003.
- **Have large trees sawn into lumber.** If you have large straight hardwood logs, contact the Missouri Department of Conservation offices in your area for help from a forester or locate processors on the Web at [www.conservation.state.mo.us/forest/products/processors](http://www.conservation.state.mo.us/forest/products/processors).
- **Build brush piles for wildlife habitat.** Start with a base of several six-inch or larger logs laid with 12-inch spaces between them. Stack more logs in two or three crisscrossing layers. Pile brush over to a total height of 6-8 ft. and a diameter of about 15-ft.
- **Use a wood chipper to make mulch.** Mulch can be used to build paths, prevent erosion and prevent growth of unwanted vegetation. Wood chips are often used in horse arenas and exercise yards and may be given to others for such purposes. Small chips incorporate into the soil more readily and may tie up soil nitrogen necessitating an application of fertilizer to ornamental plants. Larger chips decompose more slowly and their nutrient demand is spread over a longer time.
- **Haul the brush to city or county drop-off sites.** Many communities have set up convenient drop-off sites and some are offering curbside pick up. Contact your local city or county offices for information.
- **Dispose of brush in a landfill.** Ice storm debris will not be considered yard waste and will not be banned from disposal at landfills. Landfill operators will not have to pay the tonnage fee on ice storm debris disposed of in landfills from now until March 15, 2002, if they accept it free of charge. Fees remain in place for waste not related to the ice storm, and landfill operators who do charge tipping fees for ice storm debris.

- **Burn the brush on site.** A permit to burn brush is required in many cases and other limitations may apply. For Platte, Clay, Jackson, Cass, Ray or Buchanan counties call the Kansas City Regional office at (816) 622-7000. In Kansas City, St. Joseph and other incorporated areas call your city hall or local fire department. In outstate areas it is permissible for landowners to burn brush on agricultural land where the fire is at least 200 yards from the nearest occupied structure. **However, the danger season for burning has started.** Contact your nearest Missouri Department of Conservation office for information on burn bans due to dry conditions and wind.

**For more information please contact:**

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
Kansas City Regional Office  
500 NE Colbern Rd.  
Lee's Summit, MO 64086-4710  
(816) 622-7000  
[www.dnr.state.mo.us](http://www.dnr.state.mo.us)

Northeast Regional Office  
1709 Prospect Dr., Ste. A  
Macon, MO 63552-2602  
(660) 385-6398  
[www.dnr.state.mo.us](http://www.dnr.state.mo.us)

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